

Lakes that had earned a reputation for being "30 stories tall with 30 patients." Even though there were four brand-new, unused inpatient wards at the VA hospital a quarter-mile away, the federal government was preparing to spend \$180 million to replace an outdated military hospital and close a VA hospital with an increasing number of patients. This simply made no sense.

In 2001 I began urging the Navy and the VA to examine ways they can coordinate their efforts and share resources in North Chicago. After four years of intense work, and thanks in large part to the efforts of then-Navy Secretary Gordon England and then-Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Leo McKay, the two departments in 2005 agreed not only to share resources, but to fully integrate the two facilities. Last year, they announced that the joint facility would be named for a local hero, Captain Jim Lovell, hero of Apollo XIII.

This bold plan is now recognized as the model for future collaboration between the VA and DOD, and integration is well underway. They have already merged inpatient care, mental health, surgery and the emergency room. When the new facility opens in the summer of 2010, Navy and VA will fully integrate the two organizations by combining clinical and administrative operations.

In order to fully integrate the two institutions, though, a few statutory changes are required. This legislation would give the Defense Department and the VA the authority needed to open an integrated federal health care facility in 2010. The bill authorizes the departments to transfer property and personnel as needed and in a manner consistent with existing law governing transfers of civilian federal employees between agencies.

Our bill also extends the VA/DOD Health Care Sharing Incentive Fund until 2020 from its current expiration date of 2010. The daily operations at Lovell Hospital will be so integrated that it will be difficult to determine whose resources produced the care given, whether VA or DoD. This account is funded by both the VA and DOD, and both departments agree that it is the most appropriate mechanism to fund the joint facility and give its leadership the greatest flexibility to operate in a combined manner.

Finally, our legislation designates Lovell Hospital as a military treatment facility, a technical designation needed to prevent military retirees under the TRICARE system from being forced to make costly co-payments when they receive care at the joint facility. Given that the inpatient, surgical, mental health, and emergency services are already combined, thousands of TRICARE beneficiaries in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin are already subject to co-pays that should not come out of their pocket. The vision for Lovell Hospital is to provide care for active duty sailors, DOD beneficiaries, and veterans side-by-side in one fully integrated facility. The integration has been so successful, we need to update current law to recognize that Lovell Hospital serves both veterans and Navy personnel.

CONGRATULATING JAMES J. FLAHERTY, RECIPIENT OF THE 2009 W. FRANCIS SWINGLE AWARD FROM THE GREATER PITTSBURY FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Mr. James J. Flaherty, the 2009 recipient of the W. Francis Swingle Award from the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick for his many years of dedicated service to that organization.

Mr. Flaherty was born and raised in Pittston, Pennsylvania. He graduated from St. John's High School in 1960 and Penn State University in 1963.

Mr. Flaherty joined Chamberlain Manufacturing Corporation's Scranton Division in July, 1963, as a draftsman in the engineering department. In July, 1972, he was promoted to Operations Manager and, in July of 1978, he was transferred to Chamberlain's New Bedford, Maine operation as Assistant General Manager.

In 1986, Mr. Flaherty was promoted to Vice President and General Manager of the New Bedford, Maine, operation. He served in that capacity until July, 1991, when the New Bedford operation ceased production and he relocated back to Scranton as Vice President and General Manager of that division. In 2003, Mr. Flaherty was named President of Chamberlain Manufacturing Corporation. In July, 2006, General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems acquired Chamberlain. Mr. Flaherty remained in Scranton as Vice President and General Manager.

Mr. Flaherty is a member of the ARMS Public Private Task Force Executive Advisory Committee and the Industrial Committee of Ammunition Producers. He is also past president of the board of directors of the Northeast Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center; serves on the board of directors of the local chapter of the Salvation Army; is a member of The Lions Club and was an elected member of the Moscow Borough Council.

In February, 2009, Mr. Flaherty was inducted into the Ancient Order of St. Barbara, the patron saint of the U.S. Army Field Artillery, for 45 years of service to our soldiers. A son of the late James and Jean Joyce Flaherty, he and his wife, Sheila, have two children and five grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. Flaherty on this auspicious occasion. His commitment to his family, his profession and his community has earned him widespread respect throughout the region.

CELEBRATING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF SIAS INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY IN XINZHENG, CHINA

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate SIAS International University in Xinzheng, Henan Province, China on its 10th Anniversary as an institution of higher education.

Founded in 1999, SIAS International University is a new type of post-secondary experience striving to prepare students to be global citizens. Affiliated with Zhengzhou University and in cooperation with Fort Hays State University of Hays, Kansas, SIAS was designed to provide Chinese students with an educational experience that blends Chinese educational philosophies with western-style curriculum and techniques, offering students the skills needed to compete and prosper in our increasingly interconnected world.

Licensed by the Henan Provincial Education Commission, SIAS is the first Chinese institution permitted by the Chinese State Degree Office to offer core classes in Western Civilization, Sociology and Government, providing students the ability to explore new ways to think about business and liberal arts. SIAS International University is also the first solely American-owned University in Central China; thus, Chinese students earn both Chinese and American education degrees and are able to apply their skills within trans-national corporations and enterprises.

Fort Hays State University and all of Western Kansas benefit from this relationship. The university has seen an increase in the number of international students on campus which enriches the learning experiences for students, faculty, and administrators. Additionally, the community has benefitted from numerous programs that have been created to share music, art and culture with these international students.

The partnership between SIAS International University and Fort Hays State University is the perfect example of our world flattening—of east meeting west. Even the architecture on the SIAS campus, including the main administration building, symbolizes this marriage of cultures, with one side representing the Forbidden City in classical Chinese architecture, and the other modeled after our own United States Capitol Building. This western-inspired campus serves as an appropriate environment for a new way of thinking for the Chinese students and faculty.

The friendship between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China fosters an exchange of cultural richness and advances our mutual aspirations. The relationship between SIAS International University and Fort Hays State University is one part of this paradigm. Both China and America must work diligently to preserve this friendship and search for ways to recognize accomplishments when they are due. And today, recognition is due to SIAS International University for ten years of success.

Madam Speaker, I ask you to join me in congratulating the Founder and Chairman of SIAS International University, Mr. Shawn

Chen, as well as President Li Haijun for their extraordinary work. Also, please help me recognize Fort Hays State University President Dr. Edward H. Hammond, Provost Dr. Larry Gould, Assistant Provost for Strategic Partnerships Cindy Elliott, and the many others who have help foster this relationship and contributed to ten years of remarkable results. It is my hope that SIAS International University can continue its success in enriching the lives of students and communities both in China and here in America for decades to come.

RECOGNIZING BEACON GROUP SW AND THE ABILITYONE PROGRAM

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize the AbilityOne Program, which in the last year, has helped more than 40,000 Americans who are blind or who have severe disabilities gain skills and training that ultimately led to gainful employment. The Beacon Group SW implements this program in my district in Southern Arizona.

The AbilityOne Program, formerly known as the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program, harnesses the purchasing power of the federal government to buy products and services from community based non-profit agencies that are dedicated to training and employing individuals with disabilities. This program gives Americans with disabilities opportunities to acquire job skills and training, receive good wages and benefits, and gain greater independence and quality of life. This program provides essential assistance to a segment of the population that has one of the highest levels of unemployment in our country.

I am proud to acknowledge the important work of the Beacon Group, which since 1952, has provided training and employment services to people with disabilities. The history and mission of the Beacon Group stands as a clear example of why this program is a winning proposition for all parties involved.

In the past year the Beacon Group employed over 25 individuals with severe disabilities through AbilityOne contracts. With the help of AbilityOne and other programs the Beacon Group served over 1,700 individuals and their families in the community.

The direct impact of these services on the lives of Americans with disabilities cannot be overstated. For an individual with a severe disability who has never had the opportunity to hold a job, be independent, participate in community life, or contribute their talents to society; the AbilityOne Program and agencies like the Beacon Group are invaluable.

I am pleased to acknowledge the tremendous accomplishments of the AbilityOne Program and the dedication and commitment of Steven R. King the President and CEO of the Beacon Group and his staff. Each day they assist individuals with disabilities to find meaningful employment and assume their rightful place in our nation's workforce. I also want to commend each AbilityOne employee for their hard work and their participation in this important program.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RESTORING THE INTEGRITY OF AMERICAN STATISTICS ACT OF 2009

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, today, I am reintroducing a very important piece of legislation with my colleagues Mr. DENT, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Mr. GERLACH to establish the Census Bureau as an independent agency. Because the founding fathers believed it to be indispensable to the basic principles of democratic representation, the decennial census was given a constitutional mandate. A scientific endeavor of such importance should be viewed by the American public to be completely independent and non-partisan. It is time to give the Census Bureau the independent status commensurate with the scientific agencies that are its peers, such as NASA, the National Science Foundation, and others. Elevating the Census Bureau to the status of an independent agency is a powerful statement to the American people and their leaders that the decennial census and the other critical surveys conducted by the Census Bureau are protected, and that our government will summon the best demographers, statisticians, scientists and managers we can find to lead this vital agency.

HONORING AMERICAN LEGION POST 1066

HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the American Legion's Post No. 1066 in Massapequa, New York and recognize its contributions to our country and their community on the occasion of its 75th anniversary.

Members of this post have served in many foreign wars including Korea, Germany, and Vietnam, actively defending the freedoms and liberties that we cherish so much as Americans. Furthermore, several members of Post No. 1066 have also served as members of our local police and fire departments, as well as local emergency responders. As the Ranking Member of the House Homeland Security Committee, I am particularly appreciative of their dedication and hard work.

Over the years, these veterans have served my district on Long Island in a number of ways. They have opened their doors to the community to serve as a food collection site for the Interfaith Nutritional Network and to collect items to send to our servicemen in Iraq and Afghanistan. Additionally, they have collaborated with the American Red Cross to act as a disaster shelter for their neighborhood. They actively support local charities and host fundraisers for their benefit.

I am proud to represent these veterans who have served our country. They duly deserve praise for their continued participation as active citizens of New York and the United States. I would like to thank them for their leadership and continued service to our country.

HONORING KENNETH W. MACGREGOR

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Kenneth W. MacGregor. Kenneth passed away on January 9, 2009 after battling cancer. He was an outstanding advocate for public education and providing a better future for our children.

After graduating from Michigan State University, Kenneth taught high school government and coached swimming. He became active in the Michigan Education Association and was instrumental in the development of their Political Action Committee. Working in the Michigan Education Association's Government Relations Department, Kenneth was active in promoting education issues in both Lansing and Washington. He advocated for public education and public education employees at all levels of government. During his 30 year career he implemented strategies that made the Political Action Committee a force to be reckoned with and emulated.

During Gary Owen's tenure as the Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives, he tapped Kenneth to serve as his Director of Public Affairs. In 2001 he joined the National Education Association's political team and worked as the Field Manager, Government Relations West. He retired from this position in 2006.

Even after his retirement, Kenneth still devoted time to political causes. He was an active backer of "Get out the Vote" campaigns. He had a can-do frame of mind and always believed that students deserved the best education possible.

Kenneth was married to Sue MacGregor for 21 years. They have two sons and five grandchildren. He is also survived by his mother and two brothers.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the memory of Kenneth W. MacGregor. His legacy lives on in the classrooms and public schools of Michigan and across our nation. Because of his life's work, students have gained better resources, better teachers, and better services. The public education system has lost a great supporter and I mourn his passing.

THE INTRODUCTION OF A BILL THAT WILL ADDRESS THE NEED FOR A FOURTH PERMANENT JUDGESHIP FOR THE DISTRICT OF HAWAII

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce with Congressman ABERCROMBIE a bill that would convert the fourth temporary judgeship for the District of Hawaii to permanent judgeship status.

The fourth temporary judgeship for the District of Hawaii was created in 1990 by Public Law 101-650. Although the judges appointed to temporary judgeships have lifetime appointments, legislation creating temporary judgeships usually specifies that the first vacancy in